

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

March 22, 2010

U.S Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

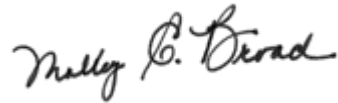
I write on behalf of the higher education associations listed below—representing two- and four-year public and private colleges and universities, and 18 million students—to express support for the education provisions contained in H.R. 4872. On Sunday evening, the House included provisions in the reconciliation bill designed to deliver urgently needed resources to the Pell Grant Program for college students from low- and middle-income families. These education provisions make critical investments in America’s students and economic future. We urge the Senate to follow suit swiftly to approve these education provisions.

Passage of these provisions will help provide students with the resources they need to pursue postsecondary education. Without the funds made available by this legislation, 8 million low- and middle-income students who rely on Pell Grants could see their grants cut to maximum award levels last seen in the late 1980s. Others could see their grants disappear entirely. It is customary in periods of economic downturn for more students to turn to postsecondary education to acquire the skills they need to succeed in a competitive job market, and this trend is more pronounced now than at any other time in history. While this action by individuals ultimately contributes to economic recovery, it temporarily puts severe pressure on the Pell Grant Program.

We are pleased the bill also invests \$2.6 billion in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities to provide students at these institutions with the support they need to pursue and complete postsecondary education. Another important feature of the bill is the \$2 billion that is made available to fund the Community College and Career Training Grant Program. Authorized in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, this program will provide competitive grants to local colleges to assist dislocated or unemployed workers or workers needing additional career training and education. These investments in students, workers and institutions will allow us to build our economy on the strength of a highly-skilled workforce. Finally, we appreciate the funding that is made available to assist schools with their conversion to direct lending under challenging time constraints.

In his first address to Congress, the president laid out an ambitious goal of leading the world in postsecondary attainment by 2020. Our institutions have embraced this goal and are strongly committed to facilitating success for every student who enters postsecondary education. The education provisions in this bill are critical investments that will help to advance this objective, and we ask you to support them.

Sincerely,



Molly Corbett Broad
President

MCB/ldw

On behalf of:

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Professors
American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
Association of American Colleges & Universities
Association of American Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Direct Student Loan Coalition
The College Board
UNCF

Budget Reconciliation Act of 2010

March 22, 2010

Page 3

United States Public Interest Research Group

United States Student Association

Women's College Coalition